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Karak Castle Center for Consultations & Training
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Monitoring Violence Against Women in Jordanian Elections Report

Parliamentary Elections

2024

Published by:
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Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Karak Castle Center for Consultations & Training	4
Executive Summary	5
The Importance of Monitoring Political Violence Against Women	8
Definition of Electoral Violence Against	10
Observation Methodology	12
Women in the 2024 Elections	13
Gender Representation by Electoral District	14
Female Candidates in the Local Electoral Districts	15
Female Candidates in the General Electoral District	16
Vote Share Among Female Candidates:	19
Ranking of Female and Male Candidates Within Their Lists	21
Interviews with Female Candidates in the 2024 Parliamentary Elections	22
Basic Information About the Female Candidates	22
Electoral Base and Party Affiliation	24
Previous Electoral Experience and Familial and Social Pressures	25
Social Media Use	26
Electoral List Registration Process	27
Election Campaign	32
Electoral Violence During the Campaign Period	34
Evaluation of Voter Engagement with Online Campaigns	41
Social Media Monitoring	48
Field Stories	54
The Importance of Supporting and Empowering Women Politically in Jordan	57
Recommendations	58
Field Photos	62

INTRODUCTION

Parliamentary elections represent a cornerstone of democratic governance and popular representation within contemporary political systems. They serve as a critical mechanism for enabling societies to freely and fairly elect their representatives and policymakers, ensuring the integration of diverse societal groups into the political and electoral process. In Jordan, parliamentary elections have consistently been a pivotal event on both the national and international stages, underscoring the state's dedication to democratic principles and transparency in political practice. Over the years, Jordan has achieved significant progress in promoting women's roles within society, particularly through policies designed to enhance their political engagement and participation in public affairs.

Despite efforts to politically empower women and increase their representation in various leadership positions, Jordanian women continue to face significant challenges that hinder their full participation in the political process. Among these challenges is the issue of violence against women during elections. This violence manifests in various forms, including verbal threats, physical harassment, defamation through social media, and even direct exclusion from political life by different entities. Electoral violence targeting women is neither a new nor a localized phenomenon; it is a global issue affecting both emerging and established democracies, where such violence is employed to restrict women's access to positions of power and influence.

In Jordan, this phenomenon is evident during parliamentary elections. Reports from the Karak Castle Center for Consultations and Training, along with various local and international organizations, reveal that women candidates and voters are subjected to multiple forms of psychological and physical violence. While women are encouraged to engage in political work, they simultaneously face societal and cultural pressures that impose restrictions, preventing them from freely expressing their opinions or running for office without fear of criticism or personal attacks. This contradiction between the call for women's empowerment and the barriers they encounter in practice undermines the credibility of the electoral process and limits its inclusivity.

This report aims to shed light on the 2024 Jordanian parliamentary elections, documenting the violence faced by women during this electoral cycle, whether as candidates or voters. It responds to the urgent need to document and analyze this issue, not only to highlight its scale but also to provide actionable recommendations for stakeholders to protect women's rights and enhance their political participation. The Karak Castle Center for Consultations and Training, a leading institution in election monitoring, seeks to offer a comprehensive analysis of violence against women with a particular focus on the 2024 parliamentary elections.

Electoral violence targeting women poses a significant challenge that requires a holistic and integrated response from both the state and civil society. Authorities bear the responsibility of ensuring a safe electoral environment that protects all citizens, particularly women, from violence and intimidation. Civil society organizations also play a pivotal role in raising women's awareness of their rights and providing legal and psychological support to those subjected to violence. Additionally, the media must actively address this issue by exposing violations against women and supporting awareness campaigns that encourage safe political participation.

Despite legislative improvements aimed at enhancing women's participation in the political process, this report presents a clear picture of how violence against women impacts the electoral process as a whole. The decline in women's participation rates reflects weaknesses in electoral awareness efforts. Electoral violence not only targets women as individuals but also undermines the principles of transparency and integrity that elections are built upon. Addressing this phenomenon is a fundamental step toward strengthening true democracy in Jordan and ensuring justice and gender equality.

Karak Castle Center for Consultations & Training

Established in 2017 in Karak Governorate, the Karak Castle Center for Consultations and Training is a women-led organization committed to empowering women and youth in Jordan. The center is dedicated to advancing economic, political, and legal empowerment while fostering professional skill development. Its mission is to create equitable and effective opportunities for active participation in social development, guided by democratic principles, human rights, and the rule of law.

With offices in Karak and Amman, the center has the operational capacity to extend its services to beneficiaries across all Jordanian governorates. It is a leading civil society organization promoting women's political participation and combating violence against women, particularly in electoral contexts. Its initiatives focus on electoral programming and political empowerment, legislative review, economic development, gender equality, and addressing digital violence against women.

In 2022, the center launched the Electoral Violence Observatory Against Women, an ongoing monitoring mechanism designed to enhance the integrity of the electoral process by documenting violations faced by women as candidates, voters, or election staff. The observatory provides comprehensive data and statistics on electoral violence, supported by field research and interviews, while developing strategies to mitigate such violations effectively.

The Karak Castle Center continues to advocate for women's representation. For instance, it spearheaded a campaign advocating for a 30% quota for women's participation in local elections in 2021, surpassing the existing 20% threshold. This campaign involved forming coalitions with 30 civil society organizations and publishing a position paper to support this objective. The center also facilitated a series of stakeholder dialogues to promote these advocacy efforts.

During the 2020 parliamentary elections, the center implemented a robust monitoring project to document electoral violence against women across all Jordanian governorates. Deploying strategically trained field teams, the initiative ensured comprehensive documentation of violations. The findings were consolidated into detailed reports that included policy recommendations aimed at enhancing protective measures for women in the electoral process.

In the realm of capacity building, the center launched the National Network for Women's Leadership (Alia) in 2022. This initiative seeks to strengthen the leadership capacities of elected women by offering targeted support and training in preparation for the 2024 parliamentary elections. Activities under this network include training programs on local governance laws, political party systems, and electoral processes, alongside raising awareness of gender issues and implementing gender-responsive budgeting.

The center also prioritizes digital safety for women through initiatives like Digital Safety for Women Activists and Elected Officials in Municipal and Governorate Councils in Southern Governorates. This program enhances online security and safeguards women against cyber violence.

These comprehensive efforts embody the center's unwavering commitment to fostering a secure political and social environment that supports women's active participation and effectively addresses violence against them at every stage of the electoral process.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report, issued by the Karak Castle Center for Consultations and Training, examines violence against women during the 2024 Jordanian parliamentary elections. The report focuses on the challenges faced by Jordanian women in their electoral participation, whether as candidates or voters. It addresses the various forms of violence perpetrated against women, including physical, psychological, verbal, economic, and digital violence, highlighting their detrimental impact on women's political engagement. By providing a comprehensive analysis of this phenomenon, the report explores its underlying causes and offers actionable recommendations to mitigate its effects. The overarching aim is to strengthen women's participation in political life and ensure a safe and equitable electoral environment.

Despite legislative advancements aimed at enhancing women's political roles, women continue to face numerous barriers that hinder their effective and full participation in elections. These challenges stem from cultural and tribal norms that restrict women's autonomy, as well as electoral violence designed to weaken their political presence. The 2024 parliamentary elections served as a critical test of Jordanian women's ability to overcome these obstacles. According to official statistics, 195 women ran for elections on local lists, including 170 candidates competing for quota seats and 187 women on general lists. However, many of these candidates faced significant challenges, with some withdrawing due to societal and financial pressures.

The report adopts a multifaceted methodology to monitor and document electoral violence against women. This includes field interviews with 167 candidates across various electoral districts, analysis of candidates' campaign activities on social media platforms, and observation of the general atmosphere at polling stations. Additionally, the report monitored candidates' social media pages, analyzing over 3,427 posts and 141,934 comments to evaluate the nature of interactions with their campaigns and the specific challenges women faced in the digital sphere.

Key Findings from Data Analysis

1. Forms of Electoral Violence

The findings revealed that women candidates faced a broad range of electoral violence, including:

Psychological and Social Violence: Nearly 44.73% of candidates reported experiencing familial and tribal pressures to withdraw from the electoral race. These pressures ranged from direct threats to social coercion aimed at preserving family or tribal unity.

Digital Violence: Approximately 28.15% of comments on female candidates' social media pages were abusive. These included bullying based on appearance, questioning their qualifications, and harsh criticism related to their social or political backgrounds.

Economic Violence: Financial challenges were cited by 60.48% of candidates, highlighting a lack of financial support from political parties and tribal networks. Many candidates were compelled to rely on personal funding or loans to sustain their campaigns.

Verbal Violence: Women candidates faced defamatory campaigns involving insults and threats, both online and during field engagements.

2. Financial Challenges

Financial constraints posed a significant barrier to women's participation in elections. Many candidates noted that financial support from political parties was minimal, forcing them to self-fund their campaigns. The report also highlighted the widespread use of political money and vote-buying, creating an uneven playing field and disadvantageous women with limited financial resources.

3. Psychological and Social Impact

Women faced immense psychological pressures due to bullying and gender-based discrimination. Candidates reported receiving direct threats from family members or tribal communities, while others encountered derogatory comments that diminished their role, often labeling them as «token» candidates on electoral lists. These pressures negatively impacted their self-confidence, leading some candidates to withdraw from the race.

4. Role of Social Media

Social media emerged as a primary platform for electoral violence against women. Candidates were subjected to organized smear campaigns, including spreading false rumors, direct bullying about their appearance, or attacks on their social backgrounds. Only a few candidates effectively responded to these negative interactions, underscoring the need for training on combating digital harassment.

5. Limited Party Support

Political parties provided insufficient support to women candidates. While some parties made commitments to support women, many candidates reported receiving little to no assistance, significantly impacting their ability to conduct effective electoral campaigns.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the Karak Castle Center for Consultations and Training has formulated the following recommendations:

Raising Public Awareness: Launch national campaigns to challenge stereotypes about women's roles in politics and integrate topics on women's political representation into educational curricula.

Combating Illicit Electoral Practices: Enact and enforce stringent laws to criminalize the use of illicit funds, including vote-buying, and address economic violence against women candidates.

Protecting Women from Electoral Violence: Develop comprehensive legal frameworks to protect women from electoral violence, including verbal, digital, and physical abuse. Establish specialized units to receive complaints from female candidates and provide legal and psychological support.

Strengthening Political Party Support: Mandate political parties to allocate a greater share of their candidate lists to women and offer targeted training programs on campaign management to female candidates.

Improving Electoral List Registration Policies: Simplify the procedures for registering electoral lists to ensure inclusivity and eliminate discriminatory practices against women during the formation of candidate lists.

Enhancing Media Coverage: Promote balanced and fair media coverage of female candidates, while actively combating misinformation and smear campaigns targeting women.

Revisiting the Definition of Electoral Violence Against Women: Advocate for a broader definition of electoral violence against women, as recognized by the Independent Election Commission, to encompass a wider range of acts that constitute violence.

The report underscores that electoral violence against women is not merely a violation of their political rights but also a significant threat to the transparency and integrity of the democratic process in Jordan. Enhancing women's participation in elections necessitates a collective commitment from all stakeholders, including government authorities, political parties, and civil society organizations. The Karak Castle Center for Consultations and Training calls for the urgent implementation of these recommendations to ensure an inclusive and equitable electoral environment. Such measures will foster a society that reflects Jordan's commitment to democratic values and human rights, while advancing gender equality and justice.

The Importance of Monitoring Political Violence Against Women

Monitoring political violence against women during elections is a critical task to ensure the electoral process is democratic and inclusive. Political violence against women remains one of the significant obstacles to achieving equal representation and justice within society. It not only hinders women's political participation but also undermines the core principles of democracy and electoral transparency. Thus, dedicated and organized efforts to monitor this phenomenon are essential for understanding its scope and developing effective strategies to combat it.

1

Firstly, monitoring political violence against women requires a thorough understanding of its various forms. This violence can manifest in multiple ways, including verbal threats, media stereotyping, political exclusion, and even physical assaults. It may occur at different levels, whether the woman is a candidate, voter, or election official. Without effective monitoring mechanisms, the scale of these violations remains unclear, leading to their perpetuation and a lack of accountability for perpetrators.

2

Secondly, monitoring political violence against women provides reliable data that can inform the development of appropriate policies and measures to protect women. Continuous monitoring enables human rights organizations and stakeholders to produce evidence-based reports that highlight the extent of the problem and recommend suitable interventions. Such reports equip policymakers with the information necessary to enhance protection measures and ensure a safer electoral environment for women.

3

Thirdly, monitoring plays a crucial role in raising societal awareness about this issue. Documenting and disseminating cases of political violence against women not only educates the public on the importance of protecting women in public spaces but also stimulates political and social dialogue. This increased awareness can pressure relevant authorities to take meaningful actions.

4

Finally, monitoring political violence against women helps ensure the integrity of elections. Electoral violence, particularly against women, undermines the credibility of elections and the democratic process. If left unaddressed, it discourages female participation in political life, thereby negatively impacting diversity and inclusivity in the electoral process.

Commitment to Monitoring

Monitoring political violence against women is a fundamental step toward creating a political environment that guarantees equal representation and mutual respect between genders. Through the combined efforts of civil society organizations, government entities, and the international community, significant progress can be made in reducing this phenomenon and safeguarding women's political rights.

The Karak Castle Center for Consultations and Training has been a pioneer in recognizing the importance of monitoring and addressing electoral violence against women. During the 2020 parliamentary elections for the 19th House of Representatives, the center conducted monitoring campaigns that documented cases of electoral violence against women. These findings were compiled into a detailed report, which urged relevant authorities to take corrective actions and establish a formal definition for this type of violence.

Following the release of the center's report, the Independent Election Commission (IEC) adopted a formal recognition of electoral violence against women and implemented measures to protect female candidates and voters. This included creating accessible complaint channels with clear follow-up mechanisms to ensure effective responses to reported violations.

Additionally, the IEC developed a gender equality policy aimed at achieving real balance in its decisions and executive instructions, alongside establishing monitoring mechanisms to track the implementation of these policies. The Karak Castle Center's recommendations also emphasized building the capacity of IEC staff to understand and address electoral violence against women effectively. Intensive training programs were introduced, equipping election monitoring teams to handle challenges specific to women during candidacy, campaigns, and election day activities.

In preparation for the 2024 parliamentary elections for the 20th House of Representatives, the center launched the "Electronic Violence Observatory Against Women" project. This initiative, involving 15 associations and institutions across Jordan, conducted awareness sessions on electronic violence against women, provided strategies to combat it, and facilitated the reporting of cases through dedicated hotlines. These efforts aim to create a safer electoral environment for women and encourage their active political participation.

Definition of Electoral Violence Against Women

The United Nations defines violence against women as:

"Any act of gender-based violence that results in or is likely to result in physical, sexual, or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion, or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life."

As indicated by the United Nations, violence against women is not limited to physical or sexual violence. While physical assault remains the most prominent and common form, there is growing international recognition that violence against women also encompasses psychological, economic, and digital violence.

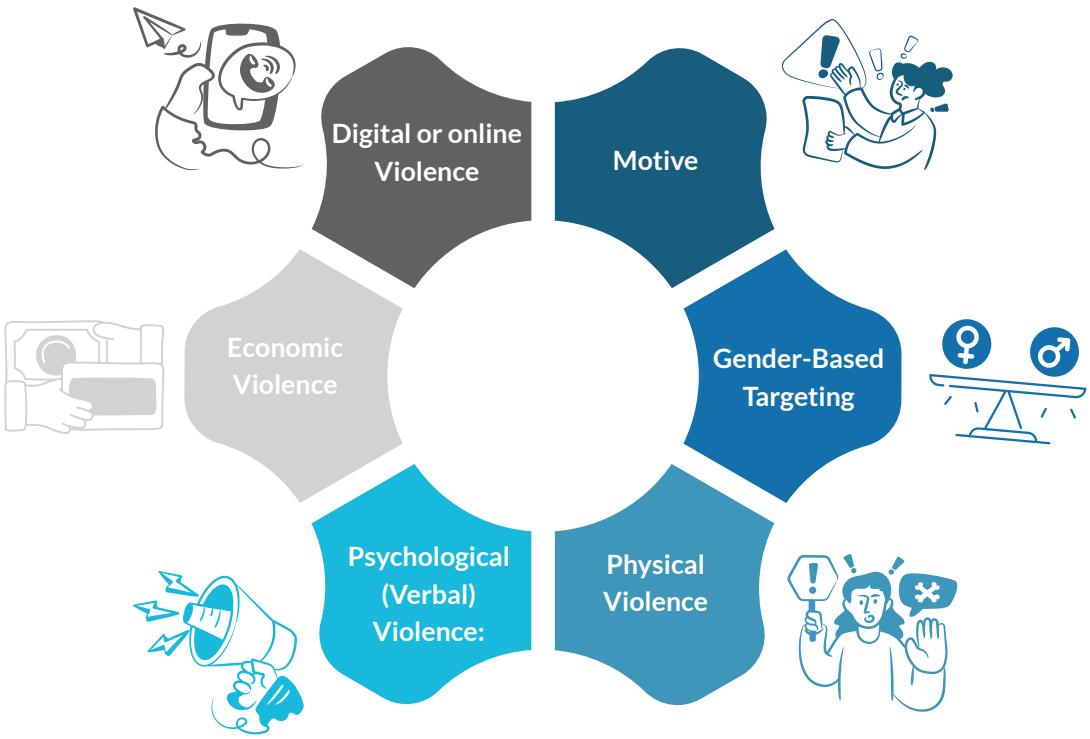
Violence against women is a complex and multifaceted issue requiring a range of strategies and interventions to mitigate its effects. In electoral contexts, the impact of such violence is profound, as it deprives women of their rights to participate equally as citizens in the democratic process. Addressing election-related violence against women necessitates strategies to ensure equal economic rights, protect victims of violence—whether domestic, familial, or electoral—and provide resources to enable women to engage independently in public life.

Political Violence Against Women and Girls

Political violence against women and girls is perpetrated against them because of their efforts to engage in political processes, such as running for office, working as election officials, or organizing electoral campaigns. Election-related violence includes coercion, force, or threats aimed at influencing voting behavior, which disproportionately affects women due to their marginalized and vulnerable status in society. Such violence prevents women from exercising and asserting their political rights.

Electoral Violence Against Women (Jordanian Electoral Context)

Electoral violence against women refers to any act or omission (whether material or symbolic) intended to deprive or hinder women from exercising any right, action, or freedom stipulated in the Election Law. This form of violence is gender-based, specifically targeting women, and undermines their ability to fully participate in the electoral process.



Key Elements of Electoral Violence Against Women

Electoral violence against women is characterized by the following elements:

Motive

The primary objective of the violence must be to influence the electoral process or its outcomes. The violence must directly relate to the election, distinguishing it from other forms of violence.

Gender-Based Targeting

The violence is directed at women specifically because of their gender. This includes acts against women as candidates, voters, or election officials.

Physical Violence

This encompasses any harmful or abusive act affecting a woman's physical safety or life, such as assault, injury, detention, or even murder. Examples include preventing a woman from voting, coercing her into voting for a specific candidate, or threatening her physical safety.

Psychological (Verbal) Violence

This includes acts of defamation, slander, degradation, threats, or deprivation of rights guaranteed under the Election Law. Verbal abuse aims to intimidate, degrade dignity, or control a woman's electoral participation.

Economic Violence

This involves acts or omissions of an economic nature that harm a woman's financial rights. Examples include the destruction of campaign posters or sabotaging a candidate's campaign headquarters.

Digital or online Violence

This form occurs in the online environment, using technologies such as mobile phones, social media platforms, or emails. Examples include harassment, sexual abuse, threats, blackmail, defamation, privacy violations, cyberbullying, and incitement to hatred or discrimination.

Observation Methodology

The team at the Karak Castle Center conducted extensive monitoring during the 2024 parliamentary elections, covering the period from the beginning of electoral campaigns on August 1, 2024 until the announcement of results on September 12, 2024. The monitoring process aimed to document incidents of electoral violence against women and provide a comprehensive analysis of the challenges they faced during this electoral cycle.

Key Monitoring Activities

- **Interviews with Female Candidates:** Conducted interviews with 167 female candidates from 17 electoral districts across Jordan. These interviews aimed to gather firsthand accounts of their experiences during the elections, focusing on challenges, incidents of violence, and their overall participation.
- **Observation of Campaign Events:** Attended and observed electoral campaign activities of female candidates, documenting the challenges they faced in engaging with voters and running their campaigns.
- **Social Media Monitoring:** Monitored social media platforms, including the official pages of female candidates, to evaluate the public's interactions with their campaigns. The analysis included posts, comments, and responses to online abuse.
- **Polling Station Observation:** Observed the general atmosphere at polling stations during the voting process, documenting any incidents that could impact female voters or candidates.
- **Incident Documentation:** Recorded incidents and violations targeting female candidates and voters throughout the monitoring period.

Data Collection and Analysis

The data collected during the monitoring period included:

Candidate Interviews: Conducted with 167 women, representing all electoral districts. These interviews covered personal and professional challenges, campaign dynamics, and incidents of violence experienced during the elections.

Field Observations: Documented in real-time during campaign events and polling days, providing qualitative and quantitative insights into the electoral environment.

Social Media Data: Analyzed 197 Facebook pages belonging to female candidates, examining public comments, shares, and interactions to document incidents of online abuse.

Observation Tools

To ensure comprehensive data collection, the team utilized:

Custom Monitoring Forms: Designed to capture incidents of electoral violence against women.

Digital Tracking Tools: Used to monitor and categorize online interactions on candidates' social media pages.

Field Observation Checklists: Employed during campaign events and polling station visits to document accessibility, safety, and incidents of violence.

Women in the 2024 Elections

The Karak Castle Center analyzed data released by the Independent Election Commission (IEC) regarding women's participation in the 2024 parliamentary elections. The analysis focused on women as candidates, voters, and participants in managing the electoral process, revealing critical insights into their involvement and the challenges they faced.

Candidate Participation

In the 2024 Jordanian parliamentary elections, 954 candidates competed across local lists, including 195 women. Of these, 170 were candidates for quota seats, and 187 were on general district lists. Male candidates accounted for 759 individuals across 174 local lists and 25 general district lists included 686 candidates, 499 of whom were male. The distribution highlights persistent gender imbalances in electoral participation.

Withdrawals

Upon the release of the final lists of candidates, a total of 17 candidates withdrew from the race, including five women. These withdrawals occurred in the following districts:

- First District of the Capital Governorate
- Balqa Governorate District
- Central Badia District
- Mafraq Governorate District
- Aqaba Governorate District

Two lists were canceled entirely due to the withdrawal of all candidates:

- The Al-Thabat list in Aqaba Governorate
- The Al-Islah list in Central Badia District

Gender Representation by Eelectoral District

The gender distribution of candidates varied significantly across electoral districts. Key observations include:

- Lowest Female Representation: Zarqa Governorate recorded the lowest percentage of female candidates at 12.24%.
- Highest Female Representation: Aqaba Governorate had the highest percentage of female candidates at 34.78%.
- General District Representation: Female candidates comprised 27.26% of total candidates in the general district.

The detailed breakdown of candidate representation across districts is presented in the table below:

Electoral District	Number of Lists	Number of Female Candidates	Percentge of Female Candidates	Number of Male Candidates	Percentge of Male Candidates	Total Candidates
General electoral district	25	187	27.26%	499	72.74%	686
First district of Irbid	12	12	12.50%	84	87.50%	96
Second districts of Irbid	11	15	19.74%	61	80.26%	76
Ajloun	7	9	34.62%	17	65.38%	26
Jarash	9	10	27.78%	26	72.22%	36
Mafraq	6	6	26.09%	17	73.91%	23
First district of the Capital	10	11	19.30%	46	80.70%	57
Second district of the Capital	9	9	12.68%	62	87.32%	71
Third district of the Capital	13	15	21.13%	56	78.87%	71
Zarqa	11	12	12.24%	86	87.76%	98
Balqa	11	17	20.99%	64	79.01%	81
Madaba	10	9	23.08%	30	76.92%	39
Karak	17	17	14.91%	97	85.09%	114
Tafileh	11	12	30.00%	28	70.00%	40
Maan	6	7	30.43%	16	69.57%	23
Aqaba	8	8	34.78%	15	65.22%	23
North Badia	7	7	33.33%	14	66.67%	21
Central Badia	9	9	33.33%	18	66.67%	27
South Badia	5	5	33.33%	10	66.67%	15
Total	**197**	**377**	**23.23%**	**1,246**	**76.77%**	**1,623**

Female Candidates in the Local Electoral Districts

Female-Only Lists: Some lists exclusively featured female candidates, such as:	Al-Ittifaq List in Ajloun Governorate (three candidates)
	Nashmiat Al-Balqa List in Balqa Governorate (seven candidates)
	Al-Himma List in Tafila Governorate (one candidate)
Equal Gender Representation: Lists with equal numbers of male and female candidates included:	Bab Al-Rayan List in Irbid Second District (three men, three women)
	Al-Faza'a List in Ma'an Governorate (two men, two women)
	Al-Ittihad List in the Tafila Governorate (two men, two women)
	Nashamiat Al-Mafraq List in the Mafraq Governorate (two men, two women)
	Al-Risalah List in the Jerash Governorate (two men, two women)
	Al-Nakhla List in the Amman Third District (one man, one woman)
	Shabab Al-Watan List in the Aqaba Governorate (one man, one woman)
	Al-Karama List in the Karak Governorate district (one man, one woman)
Lists with More than One Female Candidate: Several lists included multiple women, such as:	Al-Amal List in the Irbid Second District (three female candidates out of seven)
	Al-Tajdeed List in the Amman First District (two female candidates out of six)
	Al-Ittihad List in the Amman Third District (two female candidates out of six)
	Gaza Hashim List in the Amman Third District (two female candidates out of six)
	Al-Salam List in the Balqa Governorate (two female candidates out of seven)
	The Islamic Action Front List in the Zarqa Governorate (two female candidates out of nine)
Lists Without Female Candidates: Some lists excluded women entirely, such as:	Abna'a Al-Harathin List in the Mafraq Governorate ditrict.
	The Islamic Action Front List in the Madaba Governorate.
	The Islamic Action Front List in the Balqa Governorate.

152 lists, constituting 88.37% of the total lists, included only one female candidate.

Electoral District	Total Number of Lists	Lists with One Female Candidate	Percentage
First district of Irbid	12	12	100.00%
Second districts of Irbid	11	9	81.82%
Ajloun	7	6	85.71%
Jarash	9	8	88.89%
Mafraq	6	4	66.67%
First district of the Capital	10	9	90.00%
Second district of the Capital	9	9	100.00%
Third district of the Capital	13	10	76.92%
Zarqa	11	10	90.91%
Balqa	11	8	72.73%
Madaba	10	9	90.00%
Karak	17	16	94.12%
Tafileh	11	9	81.82%
Maan	6	5	83.33%
Aqaba	8	7	87.50%
North Badia	7	7	100.00%
Central Badia	9	9	100.00%
South Badia	5	5	100.00%
Total	**172**	**152**	**88.37%**

Female Candidates in the General Electoral Districts

The electoral lists running in the general electoral district included several female candidates. The Al-Nahda and Democratic Workers Party List had the lowest proportion of female candidates, constituting 16.67%, with only two female candidates. On the other hand, the Al-Nahj Al-Jadeed List had the highest percentage of female candidates, comprising 45.83%, with 11 female candidates out of a total of 24 candidates in the list. The details are as follows:

List name	Female		Male		Total
	Number of Candidates	Candidates Percentage	Number of Candidates	Candidates Percentage	
Etihad (Union)	10	26.32%	28	73.68%	38
National Construction	7	35.00%	13	65.00%	20
Jordanian National Democratic Alliance	11	27.50%	29	72.50%	40
Jordanian Shoura Party	6	31.58%	13	68.42%	19
Al Mithaq (Charter)	10	25.00%	30	75.00%	40
National Islamic Party	10	27.78%	26	72.22%	36
National Loyalty (Alwafa' Al Watani)	4	23.53%	13	76.47%	17
Democratic Current Alliance	7	25.00%	21	75.00%	28
Unionists and National Constitutional Alliance	8	33.33%	16	66.67%	24
Namaa and Labor Parties Alliance	9	23.08%	30	76.92%	39
Renaissance Alliance	5	20.83%	19	79.17%	24
Islamic Action Front (IAF)	7	18.42%	31	81.58%	38
Eradah (Will)	12	30.00%	28	70.00%	40
Construction and Labour	4	22.22%	14	77.78%	18
National Development Party	6	30.00%	14	70.00%	20
Justice and Reform Party	6	24.00%	19	76.00%	25
Labour (Workers) Party	6	27.27%	16	72.73%	22
Future and Life Party	4	23.53%	13	76.47%	17
Renaissance and Labor Party	2	16.67%	10	83.33%	12
Taqaddom (Progress)	14	35.00%	26	65.00%	40
Vision Party	7	29.17%	17	70.83%	24
Azm (Determination)	10	31.25%	22	68.75%	32
Jordanian Communist Party	4	21.05%	15	78.95%	19
Blessed Land Party	7	23.33%	23	76.67%	30
New Approach	11	45.83%	13	54.17%	24
Total	**187**	**27.26%**	**499**	**72.74%**	**686**

There was only one list that included a woman at the top of the list, which was the Eradah (Will) Party List. Meanwhile, a woman was ranked second on three lists: the National Construction List, the Construction and Labour Party list, and the Azm (Determination) Party list. As for the remaining 21 lists, they adhered only to what is stipulated in the Election Law by including a woman among the first nominees. Thus, women were ranked third in these lists. Below is the ranking of women in each list.

This table provides a breakdown of the female candidates by their position within the electoral lists for the 2024 elections. The total number of female candidates across all positions in the general electoral district is 187.

List Name	Women's ranking on the list											Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	More than10	
Etihad (Union)			1		1	1				1	6	10
National Construction		1				1	1				4	7
Jordanian National Democratic Alliance			1			1			1		8	11
Jordanian Shoura Party			1	1							4	6
Al Mithaq (Charter)			1			1				1	7	10
National Islamic Party			1			1				1	7	10
National Loyalty (Alwafa' Al Watani)			1			1					2	4
Democratic Current Alliance			1			1				1	4	7
Unionists and National Constitutional Alliance			1		1	1		1			4	8
Namaa and Labor Parties Alliance			1			1					7	9
Renaissance Alliance			1			1		1			2	5
Islamic Action Front (IAF)			1			1			1		4	7
Eradah (Will)	1					1		1			9	12
Construction and Labour		1			1			1	1		0	4
National Development Party			1			1					4	6
Justice and Reform Party			1			1					4	6
Labour (Workers) Party			1			1					4	6
Future and Life Party			1			1					2	4
Renaissance and Labor Party			1			1					0	2
Taqaddom (Progress)			1			1				1	11	14
Vision Party			1	1					1	1	3	7
Azm (Determination)		1		1	1	1					6	10
Jordanian Communist Party			1			1	1				1	4
Blessed Land Party			1			1			1		4	7
New Approach			1		1	1					8	11
Total	**1**	**3**	**21**	**3**	**5**	**22**	**2**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**115**	**187**

Vote Share Among Female Candidates

Of 169 female candidates analyzed, 46 received between 5% and 50% of their list's total votes. In addition, only five female candidates secured over 90% of their list's total votes, indicating notable electoral influence in certain contexts.

Percentage of votes obtained by female candidates out of the total votes obtained by the list	Number of Female Candidates
0% - 4.99%	0
5.00% - 9.99%	2
10.00% - 19.99%	0
20.00% - 29.99%	4
30.00% - 39.99%	13
40.00% - 49.99%	27
50.00% - 59.99%	35
60.00% - 69.99%	29
70.00% - 79.99%	37
80.00% - 89.99%	17
90.00% - 99.99%	5
Total	**169**

Comparison with Male Candidates

- 81 female candidates received a higher percentage of votes than male candidates in their lists (48.8%).
- In contrast, 84 women received a lower percentage than their male counterparts (51.2%).
- One list had an equal percentage of votes for a woman compared to the percentage of votes for a man.

As for the discrepancy between the percentage of votes obtained by the highest-ranking female on the list and the percentage of votes obtained by the highest-ranking male on the list, the distribution was as follows:

Percentage	The difference in votes between the highest ranked female and the highest ranked male on the list
0% - 4.99%	39
5.00% - 9.99%	37
10.00% - 19.99%	61
20.00% - 29.99%	17
30.00% - 39.99%	6
40.00% - 49.99%	4
50.00% - 59.99%	2
Total	**166**

Vote Share Variations

This distribution indicates a clear disparity in the differences between the percentages obtained by the highest female and the highest male on the electoral lists. Analysis of this distribution can give us important indications about the dynamics related to the participation of women and men in the elections, and indicates the following points:

The largest percentage of differences (0% - 19.99%):

More than 80% of cases (137 out of 166 lists) fall within this percentage. This indicates that the difference between the highest female and the highest male on most lists is relatively small. This can be explained by the importance of females on the lists and the fact that these lists receive a larger number of votes.

The average percentages (20% - 39.99%):

Constitute 23 cases (17+6) of the cases. This percentage represents a more pronounced gap in favor of either the male or the female, and may reflect weaknesses or strengths in the campaign of one of the parties in certain contexts.

The high percentages (40% - 59.99%):

Are the least common (only six cases). This indicates that large gaps between women and men in representation are the exception and not the rule.

Ranking of Female and Male Candidates Within Their Lists

For the purposes of this statistical analysis, lists containing only female candidates were excluded. The ranking of female candidates within their respective lists was as follows:

Rank	Female		Male		Total
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	
1	82	51.76%	88	48.24%	170
2	75	55.62%	94	44.38%	169
3	10	93.94%	155	6.06%	165
4	5	96.24%	128	3.76%	133
5	1	98.84%	85	1.16%	86
6	4	95.24%	80	4.76%	84
7	2	96.72%	59	3.28%	61
Total	**179**	**79.38%**	**689**	**20.62%**	**868**

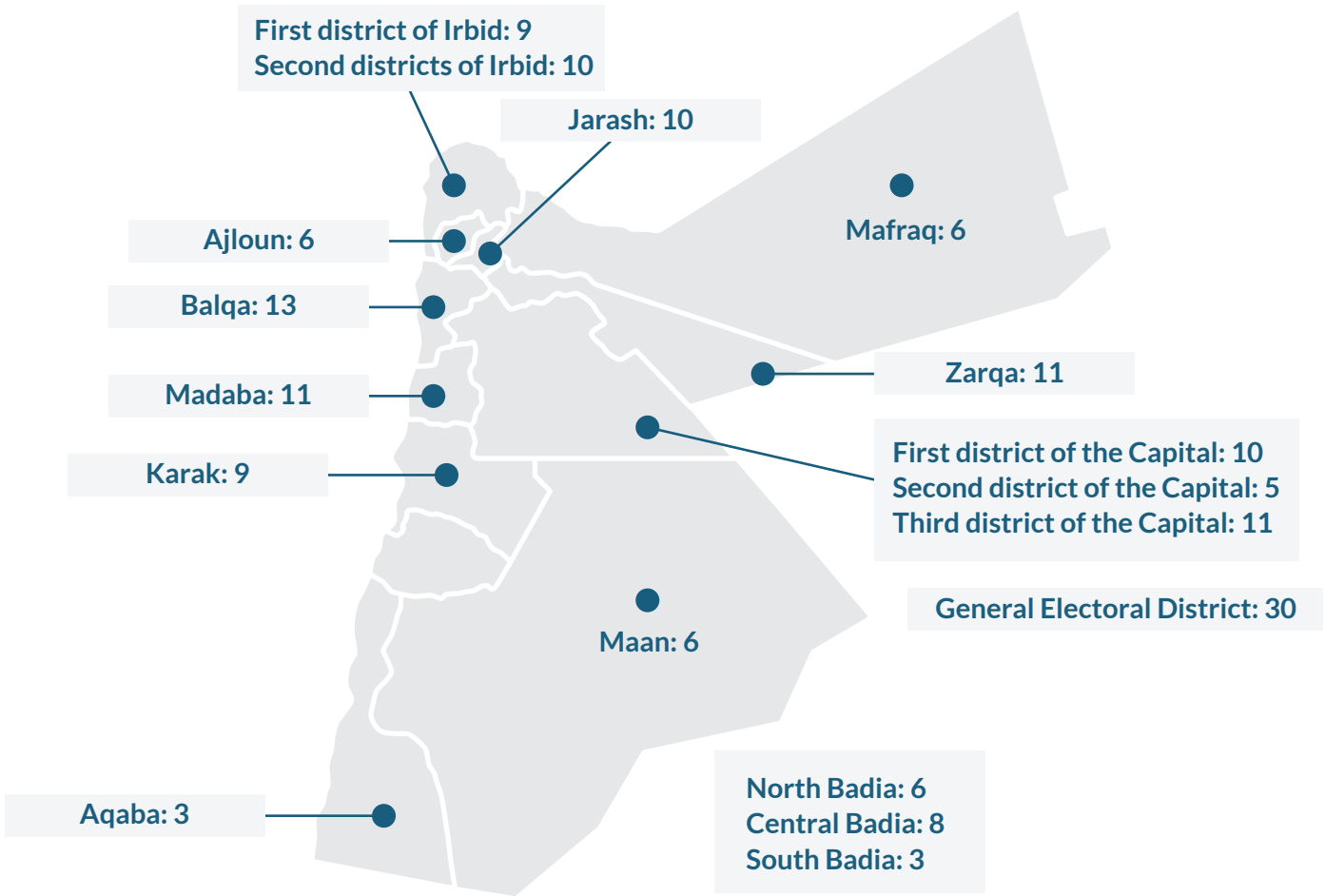
Interviews with Female Candidates in the 2024 Parliamentary Elections

Since the commencement of the electoral campaign period, the research team at the Karak Castle Center conducted interviews with female candidates running in the 2024 parliamentary elections. The research team received training over two working days on how to conduct this field research between August 15 and September 4, 2024. A specially designed questionnaire focused on various aspects, including general candidate information, the nomination process, campaign dynamics, and incidents of violence experienced during the election period. The findings from 167 interviews across Jordan's 17 electoral districts provide valuable insights into the challenges faced by female candidates.

Basic Information About the Female Candidates

Distribution Across Electoral Districts

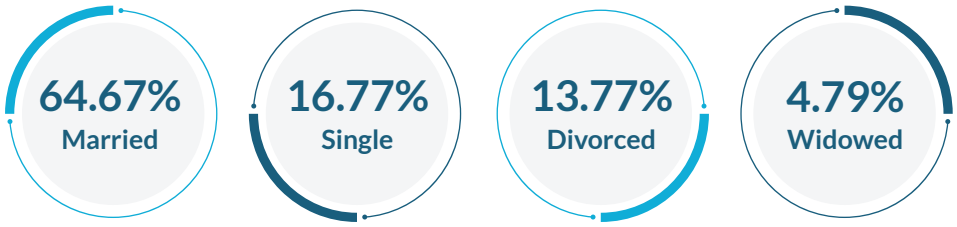
The interviewed candidates represented all 17 electoral districts in Jordan. The breakdown of interviews is as follows:



Marital Status

The candidates' marital status varied, with a majority being married:

Marital Status	Number	Percentage
Married	108	64.67%
Single	28	16.77%
Divorced	23	13.77%
Widowed	8	4.79%
Total	**167**	**100.00%**



Educational Background

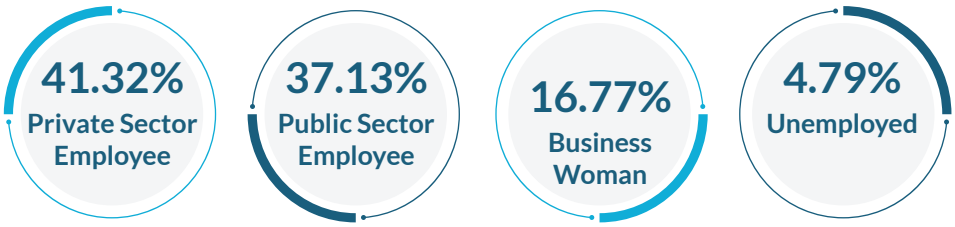
The majority of candidates held higher education degrees, with a notable proportion having postgraduate qualifications:

Educational Level	Number	Percentage
Master's or Higher	59	35.33%
Bachelor's Degree	68	40.72%
Diploma	28	16.77%
Secondary School	11	6.59%
Below Secondary	1	0.60%
Total	**167**	**100.00%**

Occupational Background

The professional diversity of the candidates highlights their active engagement in various fields:

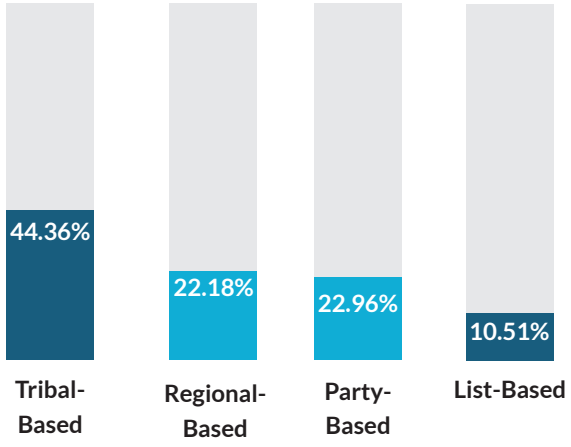
Occupation Before Candidacy	Number	Percentage
Private Sector Employee	69	41.32%
Public Sector Employee	62	37.13%
Businesswoman	28	16.77%
Unemployed	8	4.79%
Total	**167**	**100.00%**



Electoral Base and Party Affiliation

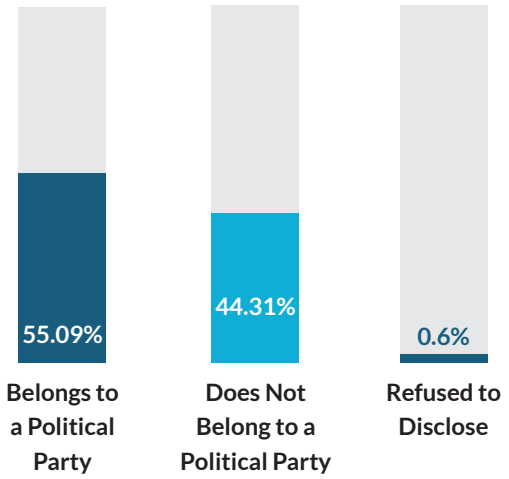
Electoral Base

When asked about their electoral base, candidates identified their primary sources of support:



Party Affiliation

A majority of candidates reported being affiliated with a political party, while others chose to run independently:



Previous Electoral Experience and Familial and Social Pressures

The interviewed female candidates stated that 120 women (71.86%) had never run in any previous parliamentary or local elections, while 47 women (28.14%) had prior electoral experience.

When first-time candidates, who represent 71.86%, were asked about their family and relatives› reactions to their decision to run, 83.33% reported that the reaction was positive and encouraging for them to undertake this experience. This indicates that women who face rejection from family and relatives may reconsider the idea of running, as they believe family support is essential for exercising their right to candidacy. This support often seems to come when the family or tribe perceives a low chance of winning a seat through competition, leading them to rely on representation through quotas.

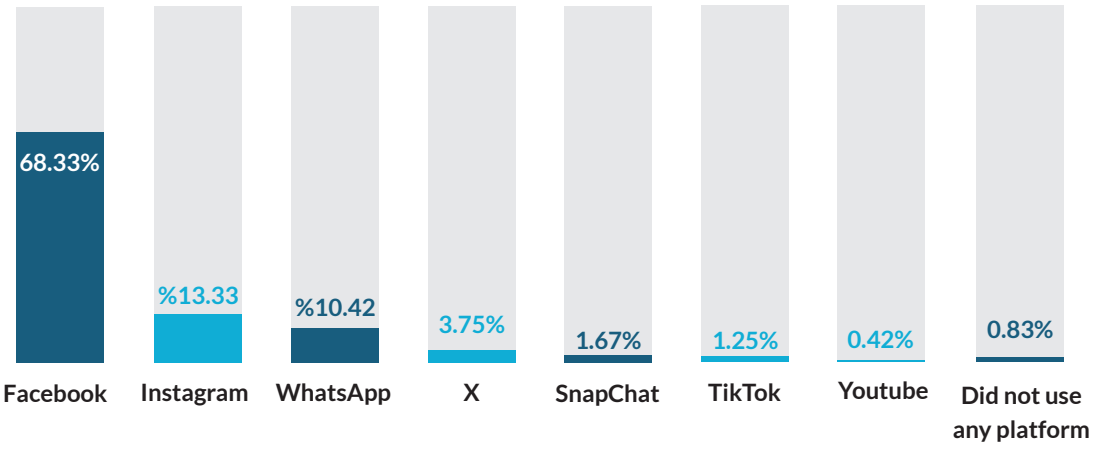
Conversely, 10.00% of the candidates described the family reaction as neutral, while 6.67% reported that the reaction was negative. Some female candidates noted that their tribes did not support their candidacy, especially in cases where women were excluded from family meetings or voting during tribal gatherings. They also faced strong opposition from certain family members, receiving public criticism on social media regarding the lack of family consensus. Additionally, some faced social rejection for not wearing a hijab and encountered family concerns about potential bullying and threats.

Furthermore, there was opposition to some candidates solely because they were women. Some believed that candidacy required frequent interactions with men and could expose them to significant responsibilities and negative comments, particularly in contexts where women are not viewed as leaders but rather as supporters of the family. Despite these challenges, some candidates decided to pursue this experience, relying on their roles as active social leaders and leveraging their wide popularity due to their community service and extensive connections with citizens through their work and relationships.

Social Media Use

Facebook emerged as the most popular platform, used by 68.33% of female candidates. A small percentage (0.83%) did not use any social media platforms for their campaigns.

Social Media Platform	Number of Users	Percentage
Facebook	164	68.33%
Instagram	32	13.33%
WhatsApp	25	10.42%
X	9	3.75%
SnapChat	4	1.67%
TikTok	3	1.25%
Youtube	1	0.42%
Did not use any platform	2	0.83%



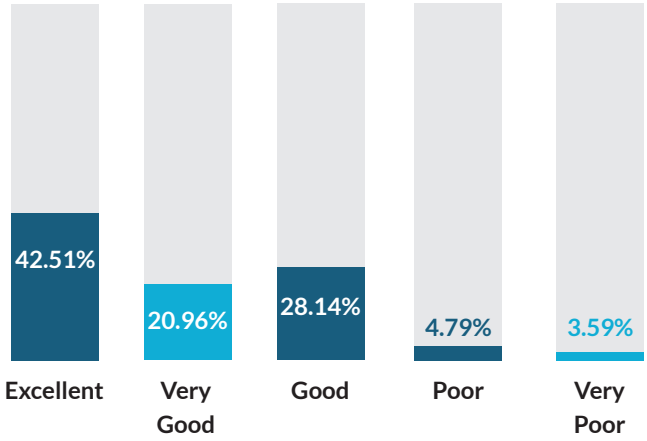
Electoral List Registration Process

Female candidates assessed the process of registering their electoral lists between July 30 and August 1, 2024:

- 42.51% rated it as excellent.
- 49.10% found it good to very good.
- 8.38% described the process as poor or very poor, citing technical issues and administrative hurdles.

The difficulties reported included delays in submitting required documents and technical malfunctions with the systems used. This increased administrative complexity and slowed the registration process. Some candidates faced hurdles in meeting specific requirements. For example, preparing authorizations, submitting financial budgets. opening a designated bank account. These requirements were perceived by many as overly burdensome and unnecessarily complicated.

How do you evaluate the electoral list registration process that took place in the past few days?



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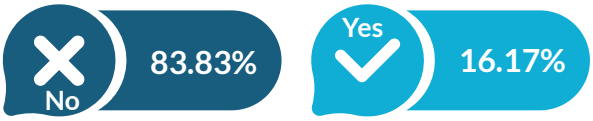
Experiences of Electoral Violence During Registration

- 16.17% of candidates reported facing electoral violence during registration.
- This violence ranged from verbal threats to social and tribal pressures.

Were you (or any of the other female candidates on the list) experienced any type of electoral violence during the registration process?



Forms of Violence Reported

The types of electoral violence reported varied and included verbal threats, physical assaults, harassment on social media. familial or societal pressures. Below is a summary of the key manifestations of electoral violence:

- **Threats and Physical Assaults:** A candidate from Ajloun reported receiving verbal threats. For example, "If you don't withdraw, you'll face trouble," and physical assaults by family members under the pretext of protecting her from potential risks.

- **Stereotyping and Discrimination:** Female candidates faced discrimination based on their gender and appearance. In Balqa, one candidate mentioned being labeled as unqualified simply because she was an unveiled woman, with her appearance taking precedence over her ideas or achievements. Similarly, a candidate from the Third District of the Capital faced opposition within her list for regional reasons, where one member opposed her candidacy while others supported her.

- **Social and Tribal Pressures:** Candidates from the First District of the Capital and the General Electoral District encountered significant challenges stemming from social and tribal discrimination. One candidate noted that her tribe opposed her assuming a leadership role as a woman. Another candidate in the General District highlighted regional discrimination within her political party. This marginalized her because she hailed from the south, resulting in her being sidelined in favor of another candidate from the same party.

- **Pressure and Threats to Withdraw:** Candidates in Zarqa and Madaba reported familial and social pressures to withdraw from the election, often to support male candidates from the same family or preserve tribal unity. One candidate shared that her family discouraged her candidacy to avoid competing against a male relative.

- **Online Abuse:** Many candidates faced online abuse and defamation. In the First District of the Capital, one candidate was criticized for wearing a face veil. The electoral commission required her to reveal her face for identification purposes, an act that negatively impacted her psychologically.

- **Defamation and Vandalism of Campaign Materials:** Candidates in Zarqa and Madaba reported incidents of their campaign posters being vandalized, alongside rumors questioning their financial capabilities or seriousness as candidates.

- **Marginalization of Women's Roles:** A candidate from the General District expressed frustration with the perception of women as mere "fillers" on electoral lists, with no substantive role. She noted that women are often expected to seek family approval as a prerequisite for candidacy, reflecting restrictive cultural norms.

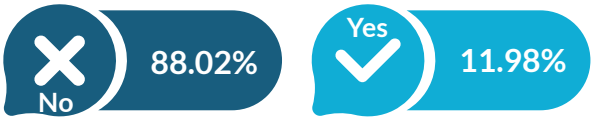
- **Political Interference and Pressure:** In Jerash, a candidate described undue scrutiny and pressure from political forces due to her candidacy on a local list, this she perceived as politically discriminatory.

- **Social Prejudice:** Candidates from Irbid and Mafraq reported encountering opposition from competing lists, experiencing incitement against them, enduring ridicule based on their qualifications or political stances.

These accounts underscore the substantial challenges faced by female candidates in an electoral environment heavily influenced by tribal values and social traditions. This often undermines women's participation and limits their active contribution to political life.

During the candidate registration process, 11.98% of candidates faced various difficulties, ranging from administrative obstacles to discrimination and familial or societal pressures.

Did the list you are part of encounter any issues during the registration process?



Summary of Key Challenges Encountered During the List Registration Process

The registration process for electoral lists presented several obstacles for candidates, ranging from administrative delays to societal and financial pressures. Below is a detailed summary of the primary challenges reported:

- **Administrative Delays and Hurdles:** Female candidates from Ajloun and Jerash highlighted inefficiencies in the registration process, including delays in document submission and technical malfunctions with registration systems. Stringent scrutiny by supervising authorities further complicated the process, leading to administrative bottlenecks.

- **Instability in Electoral Lists:** Female candidates from Balqa and Madaba reported difficulties in finding suitable lists to join. Many experienced sudden exclusions or last-minute changes in list composition without prior notice. A candidate from Madaba described the challenge of assessing lists based on their strength, alignment with her platform, and overall suitability.

- **Insufficient Financial and Party Support:** In Zarqa, a female candidate reported a lack of financial backing and material support from her political party, significantly straining her campaign. Another candidate highlighted the use of «black money» by some parties to dissuade other candidates from running, further skewing the fairness of the process.

- **Accessibility Barriers for Persons with Disabilities:** A female candidate with a disability from the First Amman District faced significant challenges accessing the registration site, which was not adequately equipped to accommodate her needs. This incident underscored the lack of inclusivity in the electoral process.

- **Challenges with Tribal-Based List Formation:** Female candidates from Madaba and the First Amman District noted that tribal dynamics heavily influenced the formation of electoral lists. In many cases, tribal structures opposed the inclusion of women as representatives, hindering their ability to join or form viable lists.

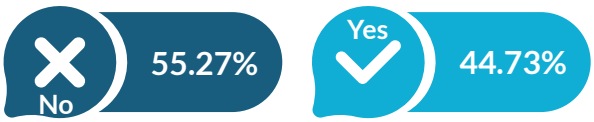
- **Complex Registration Requirements:** In South Badia, female candidates faced burdensome registration requirements, such as preparing detailed authorizations, financial budgets, and establishing bank accounts. These requirements were perceived as unnecessary and obstructive.

- **Pressures to Withdraw Candidacy:** Female candidates from the Second Irbid District reported being pressured by external parties to withdraw their nominations. They were told their candidacy would be futile and were urged to step aside in favor of other candidates. However, these incidents often strengthened their resolve to continue their campaigns.

These challenges reveal the systemic and societal obstacles female candidates face during the electoral process. From administrative inefficiencies and financial inequities to societal pressures and tribal dynamics, the hurdles reflect broader struggles for women›s equal representation. Despite these difficulties, many female candidates exhibited remarkable resilience, demonstrating their unwavering commitment to active participation in the electoral process.

In addition, when female candidates were asked whether they, or other candidates on their electoral lists, experienced pressures to withdraw from the race, 44.73% of the interviewed candidates reported encountering various forms of pressure to abandon their candidacy.

Did you, or any other candidates on your list face any pressure to withdraw from the election?



The pressures faced by female candidates during the 2024 parliamentary election were varied and included familial and tribal pressures, financial offers, and attempts to influence from competing candidates and other parties. Below is a summary of the main types of pressures experienced by the candidates:

Key Pressures Faced by Female Candidates

- **Familial and Tribal Pressures:** One of the most significant challenges faced by female candidates was pressure from their families and tribal communities to withdraw from the race. Many candidates found themselves directly confronted by family members or members of their tribes. For example, a female candidate from Karak reported intense pressure through «tribal delegations» sent to her husband and family members to convince her to withdraw, with some even threatening her with divorce if she did not comply, believing her participation in the political sphere would harm family unity. Another candidate from the capital's first district faced repeated calls from relatives of a competing candidate urging her to step aside to make room for him, part of an orchestrated effort to favor the male family member. Similarly, a female candidate from southern Jordan was prohibited from running due to an agreement between her tribe and another tribe to divide the seats, allocating the quota and competition seats based on tribal interests.

- **Electoral System Pressures:** Many female candidates faced increased tribal and familial pressures due to the electoral system. This forces women to choose between running for quota seats or regular competition seats. Furthermore, when both a male and a female from the same tribe appeared on different lists, this often led to added pressure on women to withdraw in favor of male candidates, reducing their chances and heightening familial and tribal expectations.

- **Financial Pressures:** Some female candidates were offered financial incentives to withdraw from the race. A candidate from the general electoral district reported receiving direct financial offers from local candidates and political lists in exchange for her withdrawal, believing that her exit would improve their chances. Another candidate from the capital's third district was offered large sums of money and significant job opportunities to leave her local list, as her exit was seen as beneficial for her competitors. These financial offers posed significant ethical and material pressure on the candidates, indicating that electoral competition sometimes extended beyond political boundaries to include the manipulation of financial leverage.

- **Psychological Pressures and Undermining Confidence:** Some female candidates faced psychological pressures designed to undermine their confidence and persuade them that their candidacies were futile, particularly in the race for quota seats. A candidate from Amman's third district capital recalled being publicly doubted due to not being part of the «traditional elite» supported by social networks. Her main competitor was another candidate who had the backing of influential local figures, leading people to question her political prospects, making her feel as though her efforts were futile and would lead to public ridicule if she failed to meet her electoral promises.

- **Geographical and Tribal Discrimination:** Some female candidates faced pressures based on geographical and tribal affiliations. These were considered barriers to their candidacies. In Jerash, a candidate reported facing intense tribal pressure, with relatives being convinced to oppose her candidacy, especially since another candidate from the same area was favored by the tribe. Similarly, a candidate from the general district experienced resistance from her party members because of her southern origin, where the party›s votes preferred a candidate from Irbid. This left her feeling marginalized due to her geographical background and unequal treatment within her party.

- **Pressure from Competing Candidates:** In addition to family and social pressures, some female candidates faced direct pressure from competitors who saw their withdrawal as beneficial to their chances. In Madaba and Irbid, second district candidates reported that competitors attempted to convince them to withdraw in their favor. A candidate from Mafraq recounted how many of her competitors tried to undermine her capabilities, spreading rumors to weaken her chances, putting significant pressure on her to prove herself and rise above the negative campaigns against her.

- **Verbal Abuse and Insults:** Verbal abuse and insults were also part of the pressures faced by female candidates, aiming to demoralize them and discourage their participation. In Karak, a candidate faced harsh criticism simply for being a woman. Some members of her tribe believed her candidacy would bring shame to the family, even threatening to publicly disown her if she did not withdraw, viewing her potential victory as an affront to the tribe›s social standing.

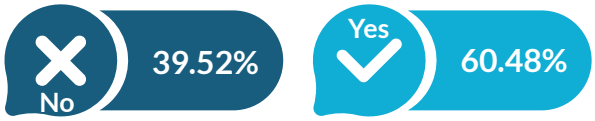
- **Social Opposition and Rumors:** Several female candidates reported facing societal pressures that hindered their meetings with the public or involved receiving anonymous threats. A candidate from the capital's first district shared that one individual tried to convince her that she «could not measure up to another candidate» from the same district.

These testimonies underscore the extent of the social, tribal. discriminatory barriers that women face in the electoral process. Such pressures create significant obstacles to their active participation, diminishing their opportunities to run and succeed in parliamentary elections.

Election Campaign

During the 2024 parliamentary election campaign period, 60.48% of female candidates reported facing significant financial challenges in funding their electoral campaigns. These difficulties ranged from insufficient funding, high advertising costs, to inadequate support from political parties.

Did you (or any other candidates on your list) face financial challenges in financing your electoral campaign?



Summary of the Critical Financial Challenges Faced by Female Candidates:

1 Insufficient Financial Support from Political Parties

A significant number of female candidates reported a glaring lack of adequate financial backing from the political parties they were affiliated with. One candidate from the general district revealed that her party offered minimal support to only a few candidates, leaving her without the necessary funds to cover essential campaign advertising. Another candidate from the capital's second district disclosed that, despite initial promises, her party completely withdrew financial support after she entered the race, forcing her to bear the full financial burden of her campaign.

2 Dependence on Personal Funds and Loans

With limited support from political parties or tribal affiliations, many female candidates had no choice but to finance their campaigns using personal savings or loans. A candidate from the general electoral district revealed that she had to take out substantial bank loans to cover advertising and establish a campaign headquarters, leaving her struggling with mounting debt. Similarly, a candidate from Karak was compelled to fund her entire campaign independently, due to the absence of external financial support, placing immense personal strain on her.

3 Exorbitant Costs of Campaign Advertising

The high costs associated with campaign advertising were a major barrier for many female candidates. A candidate from Madaba shared that the prohibitive costs of campaign headquarters and advertising materials were preventing her from reaching voters effectively. Another candidate from the second district of Irbid mentioned she was forced to conduct her campaign on foot due to her inability to cover transportation costs, severely limiting her outreach capabilities.

4 Geographic Barriers and Lack of Resources for Wide Outreach

Female candidates from large and geographically dispersed districts, such as Northern Badia and the general district, faced additional financial challenges in trying to reach a broad electorate. A candidate from Amman's first district described the significant expenses required to cover the vast electoral regions and connect with voters, but she lacked the financial resources to do so effectively.

5 Limited or Absent Tribal Support

In some cases, tribal support, which is often crucial in Jordanian elections, was either insufficient or entirely absent. A candidate from Southern Badia shared that her campaign was entirely dependent on tribal funding, placing immense pressure on her to adhere to tribal expectations and decisions. Another candidate from the third capital district revealed she received no financial backing from her tribe due to competing candidates from within the same tribe, forcing her to self-finance her campaign entirely.

6 Economic Constraints and Personal Financial Limitations

Several candidates, especially those from low-income backgrounds, faced additional burdens due to their limited personal finances. A candidate from Jerash stated that, due to her modest financial standing, she had to significantly scale back her campaign plans, reducing her ability to engage voters effectively. Similarly, a candidate from Mafraq mentioned that the escalating costs of the campaign were overwhelming, and she was seriously considering abandoning future runs due to financial constraints.

7 High Operational Costs for Campaign Management

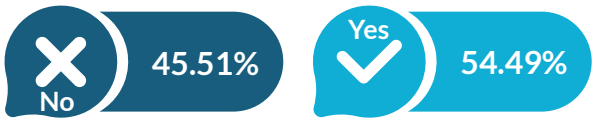
In addition to the high costs of advertising and outreach, many female candidates struggled with the daily operational expenses of running a campaign. A candidate from Zarqa pointed out the need for additional funds to cover daily advertising costs and campaign headquarters operations. Another candidate from Southern Badia emphasized the heavy financial burden of daily hospitality and transportation costs required to maintain campaign momentum, as she needed to host voters and provide transport across multiple regions.

These financial challenges underscore the severe difficulties faced by female candidates in financing their electoral campaigns. The overwhelming reliance on personal funds, coupled with the lack of sufficient support from political parties or tribal networks, restricts their ability to effectively reach voters, undermines their competitiveness. further entrenches the barriers women face in the political arena.

Electoral Violence During the Campaign Period

During the 2024 parliamentary election campaign period, female candidates faced various forms of electoral violence, which adversely affected their ability to participate fully and compete equitably. A total of 54.49% of the female candidates reported experiencing various forms of electoral violence, including verbal harassment, insults, discrimination, and social and financial threats.

Did you (or any of the other candidates on the list) experience any form of electoral violence during the electoral campaign period?



Summary of Key Forms of Electoral Violence Encountered by Female Candidates

1 Verbal Abuse and Bullying

Verbal bullying and abuse emerged as some of the most prevalent forms of electoral violence, with female candidates encountering disparaging comments that undermined their capabilities. For instance, a candidate from the General Electoral District reported receiving mocking remarks such as "Who is she?" and "What is she even doing?" These comments reflect a dismissive attitude toward women in politics. Similarly, in the capital's first district, one candidate faced harsh criticisms from her own family, with statements like "She does not represent us," underscoring the social constraints limiting women's ability to run for office freely. Another candidate from the third capital district was ridiculed based on her prominent family ties, with some dismissing her candidacy as an automatic success due to her status as a "Basha's daughter," rather than acknowledging her qualifications and experience. Such forms of verbal abuse serve as a clear strategy to belittle women's competencies and dismiss their potential for political success.

2 Vandalism and Removal of Campaign Materials

Vandalism of campaign materials is another form of physical electoral violence directed at female candidates. Candidates from Jerash, North Badia, Zarqa, and Ma'an reported deliberate acts of damage to their electoral posters. A candidate from the North Badia mentioned that her posters were torn down within an hour of being posted, while a candidate from the third capital district witnessed masked individuals disposing of her campaign posters in trash bins shortly after they were put up. Such acts of vandalism not only deny women equal opportunities to engage with voters but also disrupt their ability to effectively communicate their electoral platforms.

3 Discrimination Based on Appearance and Gender-Based Violence

Several candidates encountered bullying and discrimination based on their appearance or gender. For example, a candidate from Ma'an faced verbal abuse for not wearing a hijab, with detractors labeling her as "immodestly dressed." Another candidate from Madaba received negative comments solely because of her gender, reflecting the persistent stereotype that women are incapable of effecting political change. These forms of bullying and discrimination present significant obstacles for women by reinforcing harmful gender stereotypes that hinder their political participation.

4 Psychological Violence and Coercion to Withdraw

Many female candidates experienced psychological violence aimed at pressuring them to withdraw from the electoral race. This took the form of family threats or financial offers. For example, a candidate from Karak shared that some tribal members pressured her to withdraw in favor of a candidate from the same tribe, even going as far as threatening her with divorce. Another candidate from Balqa reported intense psychological pressure from rival tribal factions, who argued that her candidacy would negatively impact male votes within the tribe. These experiences highlight the extent of psychological violence women face to force their exclusion from the political sphere, demonstrating the broader social challenges they must navigate.

5 Geographic and Racial Discrimination

Certain female candidates faced discrimination based on their geographic or ethnic origins. A candidate from the third capital district reported facing bias due to her Palestinian roots, with some labeling her an outsider, despite her having lived in the region for thirty years. Similarly, a candidate from Jerash was rejected by local tribal leaders because she was not considered "a daughter of the region." This form of discrimination based on geographic or ethnic identity is a form of electoral violence that perpetuates social exclusion and undermines the representation of marginalized groups.

6 Cyber or Online Violence and Defamation on Social Media

Several female candidates faced online campaigns aimed at discrediting them, including the creation of fake social media accounts and the spreading of defamatory rumors. A candidate from Zarqa reported that someone impersonated her on social media to organize events under her name. Another candidate from Mafraq experienced online bullying from competitors, adding further pressure to her campaign. Cyber violence, including online defamation, is a dangerous form of electoral violence that can severely damage a candidate's reputation and impede her ability to effectively communicate with voters.

7 Social and Financial Discrimination

Some female candidates encountered social and financial discrimination from political parties or tribal groups. A candidate from the General District reported being labeled as "just filler" in her party's list, with comments suggesting that women from poorer backgrounds had no place in the legislature. Another candidate from the third capital district reported receiving demands for money in exchange for votes, reflecting the distorted view that political participation is a transactional commodity.

8 Financial Extortion and Requests for Bribes from Voters

Some female candidates were subjected to direct financial extortion by voters who demanded money in exchange for their votes. A candidate from the third capital district reported receiving such demands, making her hesitant to engage with these voters due to the rising costs of her campaign. Another candidate from the first capital district mentioned that members of her list pressured her to cover campaign expenses, given that she was the only woman on the list. Financial extortion is an additional burden that complicates women's ability to participate fully in electoral campaigns.

9 Family Pressures and Internal Family Opposition

Many female candidates encountered pressures from family members to prevent them from running or to push them into withdrawing. A candidate from the General District reported that her brother attempted to sway voters against her, as he opposed her candidacy due to his own failed political experience. Such familial opposition represents a significant social challenge for women, often limiting their ability to exercise their electoral rights and make independent political decisions.

10 Financial Challenges and Obstacles to Campaign Financing

Many female candidates faced significant financial barriers in funding their electoral campaigns, with some relying on personal loans or limited support from their tribes. A candidate from Karak revealed that she had to finance her campaign from her own savings due to the lack of external support, while another candidate from the General District resorted to borrowing funds to cover campaign expenses. These financial constraints reduce women's opportunities to reach voters effectively and engage fully in the political process.

These experiences demonstrate that electoral violence against female candidates is not confined to physical violence alone but extends to psychological, social, economic violence. gender-based, ethnic, or geographic discrimination. These examples highlight how the electoral environment in Jordan presents significant challenges for women, requiring them to show remarkable resilience and determination to run for office despite numerous barriers. Therefore, female candidates need stronger support from political parties, and the broader society. legislative interventions to protect their electoral rights and ensure equal political participation.

The monitoring team has documented a diverse range of field images that capture instances of deliberate sabotage of electoral campaigns:

حزب
إرادة
ERADAH
القائمة
الحزبية
د. زينب أحمد المومني
#صوتك_إرادة

قائمة المستقبل
٣
مرشحتكم
م. نور أحمد اللوزي

قائمة
حـــزب العمـــال
عدالـــة . حرية . رفاه
نحن الحل
القائمة
الحزبية
13

2

القائمة
1
محمد هديب
شفاء صوان
ادعم مرشحك
بصوتك للكوتا

5
رائدة العمل الخيري
فادية عيا
المشاقبه
كتلة العمال

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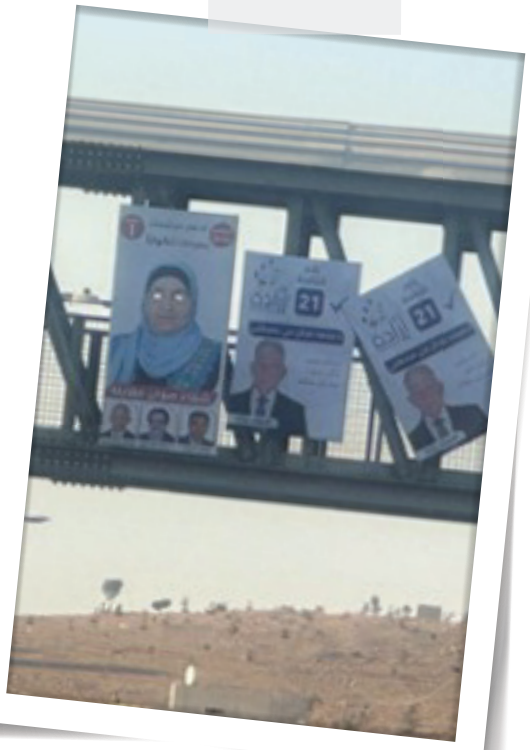
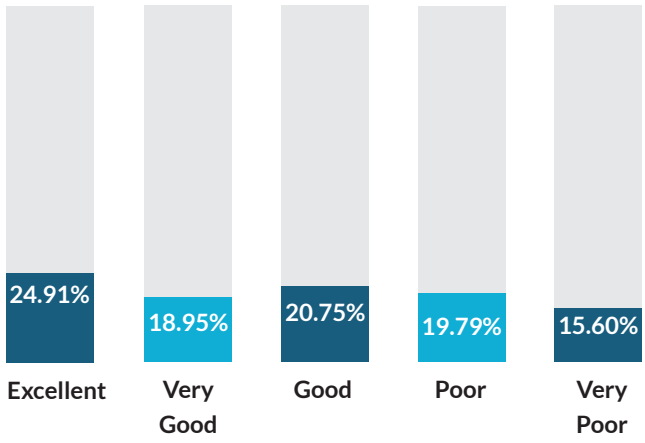


المهندسة
محمود الحراحشة
اللهم اموت واحيا

Evaluation of Voter Engagement with Online Campaigns

Regarding voter engagement with female candidates' online campaigns during the 2024 parliamentary elections, 24.91% of the candidates reported excellent engagement, while 35.39% indicated that engagement was poor or very poor. This data is summarized in the table below:

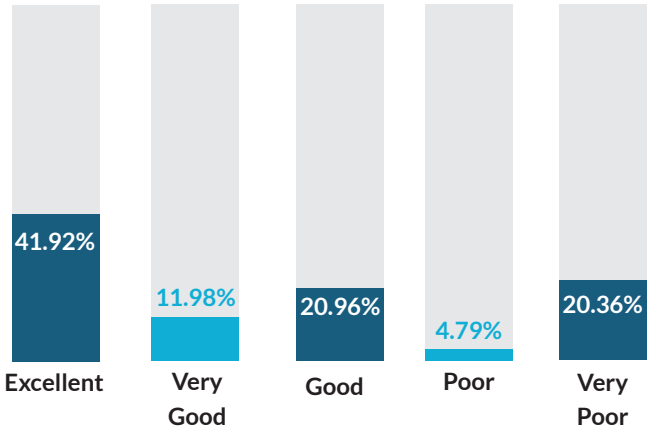
How would you assess voters' engagement with your online campaign?



Media Engagement with Electoral Campaigns

When candidates were asked about media engagement with their electoral campaigns, 20.36% reported that the media interaction was excellent, as illustrated in the table below:

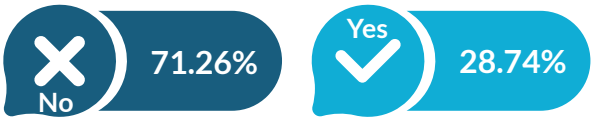
How would you evaluate media engagement with your election campaign?



Negative and Derogatory Comments on Social Media

In the 2024 electoral campaigns, 28.74% of female candidates were subjected to negative and derogatory comments on social media, which has increasingly become a platform for verbal and psychological abuse. These attacks negatively impacted their electoral campaigns. Offenses included comments intended to humiliate the candidates by diminishing their capabilities, making judgments based on gender, appearance, and political affiliations.

Do social media users refer to you (or any of the other candidates on your list) in a negative or derogatory manner?



Key Forms of Harassment Faced by Female Candidates

1 Direct Bullying and Gender-Based Harassment

Many female candidates reported receiving comments aimed at belittling them due to their gender, with some claiming that a woman's place is "in the home" rather than in politics. For example:

- A candidate from the Second Capital District mentioned comments such as, "Go back to your home; a woman's voice is shameful."
- Another candidate from Mafraq was advised to stay "in the kitchen."
- A candidate from the Southern Bedouins region reported receiving remarks like, "You're of no use," reflecting a lack of recognition for women's roles in political life.

2 Minimization of Female Candidates and Labeling as "Fillers"

Female candidates encountered comments that undermined their presence on electoral lists, labeling them as "fillers"—a term used to question their qualifications and legitimacy.

- A candidate from the General District stated that she and her colleagues were referred to as "fillers," merely included to meet requirements.
- Another candidate from Balqa reported similar remarks about her all-women list, with online comments stating, "It's the first time in history that an entire list is made up of women," portraying this as controversial.

3 Mockery and Harassment Based on Appearance

Some female candidates experienced bullying focused on their physical appearance, highlighting societal expectations for women to conform to specific standards.

- A candidate from the Third Capital District mentioned receiving comments comparing her headscarf to that of Jewish women, alongside other derogatory remarks about her appearance.
- Another candidate from Madaba was criticized for being "immodestly dressed" because she did not wear a headscarf, reflecting societal biases dictating women's outward appearances.

4 Unwanted Flirtation and Harassment

Several female candidates reported inappropriate flirtation and harassment on social media, constituting a form of online abuse.

- A candidate from the General District noted receiving flirtatious messages and harassment on her personal accounts, which disturbed her during the campaign.
- Another candidate from the General District reported being mocked for her "red cheeks," a form of sexual harassment that undermined her dignity.

5 Tribal Criticism and Social Pressure on Social Media

Some female candidates faced family or tribal pressures via social media, including attempts to persuade them to withdraw or question their ability to win.

- A candidate from Karak reported that family members posted negative comments online, even threatening to disown her if she continued her campaign.
- Similarly, a candidate from Zarqa reported receiving comments designed to erode her confidence and question her electoral prospects.

6 Harassment Linked to Political Affiliation and Party Criticism

Female candidates faced criticism based on their political affiliations, with comments mocking their parties and questioning their credibility.

- A candidate from the General District mentioned receiving remarks such as, "What have you women done for the country?"
- Another candidate, affiliated with a national Islamic party, reported comments suggesting that her attire was inconsistent with her political background, prompting her to delete several harmful comments.

7 Bullying Based on Academic Qualification

Some female candidates faced harassment targeting their academic qualifications, questioning their eligibility for parliamentary roles.

- A candidate from the Third Capital District reported being mocked for holding an honorary doctorate, which some deemed "insubstantial" for parliamentary candidacy.
- These comments reflect a broader societal tendency to undervalue women's academic achievements.

8 Psychological Violence and Coercion to Withdraw

Incitement to Withdraw from the Election: Several female candidates reported receiving discouraging comments designed to persuade them to abandon their campaigns.

- A candidate from the Second Capital District shared comments such as, "Elections are a headache," and, "You can't compete with the big sharks."
- Another candidate from Zarqa received messages meant to demoralize her and pressure her to withdraw.

9 Racial and Regional Discrimination-Based Bullying

Some female candidates faced harassment based on their ethnic or regional origins.

- A candidate from Jerash reported comments declaring that women's participation in elections was "inappropriate" under tribal traditions.
- A candidate from the Third Capital District noted being criticized for her tribal background, with claims that she was not "from the area," causing significant psychological stress.

10 Questioning the Credibility and Integrity of Campaigns

Female candidates faced skepticism about their ability to effect meaningful change.

- A candidate from the First Capital District mentioned comments like, "Success depends on looks and beauty," dismissing women's competence.
- Another candidate from the Northern Bedouins District reported comments downplaying her political participation, negatively impacting her morale.

11 Harassment and Defamation of Family Members

Some female candidates encountered comments targeting their families, aiming to tarnish their reputations indirectly.

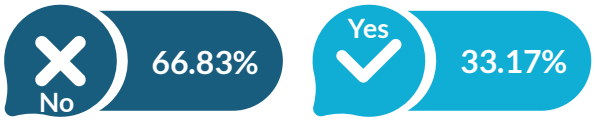
- A candidate from the First Capital District reported an individual posting defamatory remarks about her family and husband, leading her to file a formal complaint with the Cybercrime Unit.

These experiences underline the significant challenges women face in politics, where harassment often targets not only their political abilities but also their personal and family lives. Female candidates need greater societal support, legislative measures to criminalize online harassment, and awareness campaigns to ensure their right to participate equitably and safely in political activities.

Incidents Faced by Female Candidates During the Elections

During the election period, 33.17% of the female candidates reported being subjected to various incidents, including threats, direct and indirect assaults, property damage, verbal harassment, and attacks against family members.

Did you, your campaign, or any of your family members experience any incidents during the past period?



Summary of Key Incidents and Actions Taken by Some Female Candidates

1 Vandalism of Electoral Property and Campaign Materials

Female candidates experienced deliberate property damage related to their campaigns. A candidate from Ajloun reported the theft of her campaign signs and damage to her car mirrors but chose not to pursue legal action. In the Third Capital District, another candidate revealed that masked individuals removed her campaign posters and replaced them with posters of a rival candidate. This incident resulted in a confrontation between supporters of both candidates and led to an official complaint to the local security center.

2 Verbal Harassment and Direct Threats

Several female candidates and their families received verbal threats aimed at pressuring them to withdraw from the race. For instance, a candidate from Ajloun reported threats targeting her family, urging her to quit the race. Similarly, a candidate from Karak faced insults and rumors about her character, which were used as tools to force her out of the electoral competition. Despite these threats, neither candidate pursued legal action.

3 Defamation and Privacy Violations on Social Media

Female candidates were subjected to online defamation and breaches of privacy. A candidate in the First Capital reported that her personal social media account was hacked, leading to the unauthorized sharing of inappropriate videos. She filed a formal complaint with the Cyber Crimes Unit and took measures to secure her accounts.

4 Unwanted Flirtation and Harassment

Harassment of Family Members: Family members of female candidates also faced harassment. A candidate from the Third Capital revealed that her father and brother were targeted by individuals linked to a rival candidate, who made disparaging remarks about her campaign signs. An official complaint was filed, but the matter was resolved amicably through tribal mediation.

5 Physical Assault Attempts

In extreme cases, female candidates faced physical threats. For example, a candidate from Zarqa reported being deliberately targeted in car accidents, which she perceived as intentional attempts to harm her. She filed complaints with security authorities, who took action against the responsible parties.

6 Removal of Electoral Posters Leading to Physical Fights

In Madaba, one female candidate reported that all her campaign posters were removed, leading to a physical altercation between her campaign manager and family members. An official complaint was lodged at the local security center.

7 Public Defamation in Community Spaces

Some female candidates were defamed in public forums. A candidate in Zarqa reported that an individual publicly criticized her candidacy in a mosque, arguing that women should not run for office. She filed a complaint with the authorities, who took appropriate measures.

8 Attempts to Sabotage Campaign Headquarters

Female candidates faced sabotage at their campaign headquarters. For instance, a candidate from Jerash reported that supporters of a rival candidate tampered with her campaign's lighting wires. However, she did not file a complaint. Similarly, a candidate from Mafraq reported repeated instances of campaign materials being vandalized without taking formal action.

These incidents highlight the significant challenges faced by female candidates, who are often subjected to deliberate attempts to disrupt their campaigns and intimidate them. Although some candidates have taken legal action, many opt not to do so due to concerns over potential negative impacts on voter support or the escalation of harassment. These incidents reveal the harsh reality for women in politics, underscoring the urgent need to enhance the protection of female candidates and their families to ensure a safe and fair electoral environment.

Reporting and Legal Actions

- Among candidates who faced incidents, 36% filed formal complaints with authorities, while 64% refrained from taking legal action.

- Reasons for not filing complaints included a lack of awareness about procedures, fears of negative impacts on their campaigns, and concerns about escalating the situation.

Recommendations for Addressing Incidents

The findings underscore the need for:

- **Expanding Awareness Campaigns:** Inform candidates about the procedures and resources available for addressing electoral violence.

- **Enhancing IEC Mechanisms:** Strengthen the Independent Election Commission's complaint-handling mechanisms to provide timely support.

- **Developing Protective Frameworks:** Introduce comprehensive policies to protect candidates from intimidation and ensure fair electoral processes.

To address the challenges that female candidates were expected to face during the parliamentary elections, the Karak Castle Center for Consultations and Training, in collaboration with the Independent Election Commission, issued a guidance manual on filing complaints and reports, which outlined the procedures the Commission follows when receiving any complaint or report.

Social Media Monitoring

Karak Castle Center›s team conducted comprehensive monitoring of social media platforms during the 2024 parliamentary election campaigns, focusing on the Facebook pages of female candidates. This monitoring aimed to track all posts shared on their personal campaign pages and analyze public interactions with these posts.

A total of 197 Facebook pages of female candidates were monitored, including 3,427 posts and their associated comments. The analysis revealed a total of 141,934 comments, with 28.15% (39,958 comments) being classified as negative or offensive. It is important to note that the actual number of offensive comments may be higher, as many page administrators proactively deleted inappropriate comments and utilized blocking features to prevent further abusive remarks.

In response to these negative comments, a total of 1,648 replies (4.12% of all comments) were posted by page administrators or followers, often characterized by positivity and an attempt to de-escalate the negative discourse.

Examples of Offensive Comments on Candidates' Pages

Direct Harassment and Insults

Many candidates received comments that targeted their gender, appearance, or qualifications. These comments sought to undermine their credibility as political participants. For instance:

- "Women belong in the home, not in parliament."
- "You lack the education to be in politics."
- "Your appearance is unsuitable for public office."

Defamation and Character Assassination

Candidates faced deliberate attacks on their reputations. Comments included accusations of being unfit to lead or claims that their participation was only symbolic. Examples include:

- "She's just there to fill the quota."
- "What can a woman accomplish in politics?"

Mockery of Campaign Initiatives

Some candidates' campaign promises or platforms were ridiculed, with comments diminishing the seriousness of their candidacy:

- "What's the point of electing her? Nothing will change."
- "She's only running to be seen, not to make a difference."

Appearance-Based Criticism:

Candidates were often judged based on their physical appearance rather than their policies or ideas. Comments ranged from mocking their attire to making inappropriate or sexualized remarks:

- "She should focus on looking good, not politics."
- "Is this a beauty contest or an election?"

Impact of Social Media Harassment on Female Candidates

The monitoring highlighted that negative comments had a significant psychological and professional impact on female candidates online presence, including moderating comments and addressing false claims. This additional burden often detracted from their ability to focus on their electoral campaigns.

Some candidates chose to respond to the harassment directly, aiming to clarify misconceptions and defend their positions, while others preferred to ignore or block offensive users to avoid further conflict. However, for many, the persistent negativity on social media platforms created a hostile environment that amplified the challenges they faced in an already competitive electoral process.

The increasing prevalence of online harassment during electoral campaigns reflects broader societal attitudes that seek to undermine women's political participation. Tackling this issue requires a multifaceted approach involving legal reform, public awareness, and institutional support to foster a safe and inclusive digital space for all candidates. Addressing these challenges effectively will empower women to engage confidently in the political process, free from fear of intimidation or discrimination.
Examples of Offensive Comments on Candidates' Pages:

ما كانت الحسناء تكشف سترها
لو كان أرباب البيوت رجال
كلام منتهي آللهم ردنا إليك ردآ جميلآ واستر على اعراضنا واعراض المسلمين
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هي الي تفوز بالجمال
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الله يرحمك يا يحيى سعود لو تشوف يلي بنشوفه
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اكتفي ببيتك و اهل بيتك أولى....فهذا كله كلام فارغ ما ضاعت الاوطان وقل الرجال الا من وراء المناداة بالمساواة ان لم ينفع الوطن رجاله فعليه السلام
٤٥ د أعجبني رد

يافرحه السلط. زغرتي ياهلايه
2w Like Reply
وشو هالتقدم اللهم زد وبارك على كل حال الرجال في السجون والباقي أشباه رجال
2w Like Reply
ان شاء الله فالك النجاح ان شاء الله نشوفك تحت القبه
2w Like Reply
Aisha Abdullahi replied · 1 reply
انشاء الله
بلكي سون اشي احسن من هالزلم الجذابه اقلع
انشاء الله ماحدا يصل المجلس
2w Like Reply
بالعاده مراءه مع رجل ممكن يتفقوا أما نسوان سابع المستحيلات الاتفاق
2w Like Reply
بحكيلك السابعه عليها الجلي
2w Like Reply 1
مضلش زلم

لو ما فازت بالانتخابات فازت بقلوبنا 😂😂😂 .🤍
Reply See translation
View 4 more replies
جعل ما حدا يصير نائب بعدك😂😂😂
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View 4 more replies
يا هيك الصوت يا بلاش 💔
حبيبتي انتي بدي اشقف حالي شقف وكل قطعه تصوتلك
Reply See translation
View 1 more reply
شو النسوان الحلوة هاي ❤️
Reply See translation
بزبط اصوت وانا ما معي هوية ؟؟ 😂
Reply See translation
View 3 more replies
يسعد النسوان محلاهن 😔❤️❤️❤️❤️
Reply See translation

نحنا الأردنيات😘
٢١ س أعجبني رد
عرض ردين آخرين
فازو بالذنوب 🔥
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حسبي الله بلي فوت الكوتا على هالمجلس بس
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بنات الرجال مكانهن ببيوت الرجال
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مبادئ كثير من الناس
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لا حول و قوة إلا بالله العلي العظيم

2w Like Reply
بالتوفيق ان شاء الله
2w Like Reply
متفضيات والله. انداري
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انشا الله صوتي الكو بلكي طلعتو احسن من الرجال بالمجلس
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فريق كرة طائره
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الواحد ما هو عارف شو بده يحكي أخذن الوظايف والشباب في بطاله دنيا ياما راح نشوف فيها
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وين الزلم راحت
جدها رئيس وزراء ومستشار. كيف ما تحجز
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مجلس النواب لازم كله رجال بلا نسوان بلا هم/ خليهن بالبيت مكانهن البيت والمطبخ والاولاد وبس
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عرض ٦٠ ردًا آخر
الاولى ايش اسمها؟
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انا معهن كلهن😂
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عرض ردين آخرين
الصوت امانه ومن باب الامانه الثالثه تستحق الصوت
1 ي أعجبني رد
عرض ٣ ردود أخرى
معقول رجالك مو شايفه شعراتك؟ ليش لابسه حجاب..
٨ س أعجبني رد ١٨
لو كان عندها رجال م تلاقيها بمكانها هذا 👍 صارت الغيرة وحرارة الدم نادرة بهذا الزمن
١ س أعجبني رد ٤
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١٨ د أعجبني رد ١

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كل دعم بالمال والعيال 🌹
2w Like Reply
الي بشوفها جايه عليه تطلب أصوات بعصاة القشاطه
2w Like Reply
في معهم كوتا زلمة ؟ هههههه
2w Like Reply
بدهن محرم هضول ✅🙂
2w Like Reply
فالكن المطبخ
2w Like Reply
اقعدن يا بنات
2w Like Reply
البيان الانتخابي تبعهن: ولا عيل في باص النسوان
2w Like Reply
سافرات مفرعات، هدول اللي بتفاخروا ببداوتهم وين عشايرهم عنهم ا، بلا حجاب
341
Reply See translation
View 167 more replies
عرض أزياء مش انتخابات 😂
775
Reply See translation

الوضع ما يطمن
2w Like Reply
كلام نواعم
2w Like Reply
لا والله بينهن وبين نواعم جبال
2w Like Reply
2w Like Reply
Write a reply...
أجازه الأمومه مشروعة بمجلس النواب ؟
2w Like Reply
الله يرحمك يا يحيى السعود
2w Like Reply 39
شر البلية مايضحك...هي مطول الدنيا تا تخلص
2w Like Reply 2
Write a reply...
النبي ﷺ قال: لن يفلح قوم ولوا امرهم امراة وهذا حديث عظيم، رواه البخاري،
2w Like Reply 19
وانا اشهد ☝🏽
المرأة في الإسلام معزّزة مكرّمة مصانة و رضيّة راضية من رب العباد اذا التزمت بيتها بس ، و اللي عنا بدورن كيف يمصخن و يبهدلن حالهن ...
انداري ؛
2w Like Reply 2

صار بدها صفنه
٤٢ د أعجبني رد
والله يخوي شكله راح نصفن كثير مع طلعه هيك شخصيات... مابعرف شو الانجازات لي عملوها للبلد..
تخوفي بحكو صوت المراه عورة وانتي مبينه ملتزمه
٢ ي أعجبني رد
اختفي ببيتك و اهل بيتك أولى....فهذا كله كلام فارغ ما ضاعت الاوطان وقل الرجال الا من وراء المناداة بالمساواة ان لم ينفع الوطن رجاله فعليه السلام
٩ س أعجبني رد
راحت هيبة البدو ،، الا من رحم ربي

كل الدعم المعنوي
من الباديه الجنوبيه
٨ س أعجبني رد
٤
عرض 2 من الردود...
الحق على الي بياريج ويمشي معك
بنات الرجال مكانهن ببيوت الرجال
٢٥ د أعجبني رد
٣
كله عشان المادة اللي غيرت مبادئ كثير من الناس
١٥ د أعجبني رد
لا حول و قوة إلا بالله العلي العظيم
تقعد فدار احسن شو موديها عل مجلس النواب
مهو كلو ضرب بل متكات والكنادر وياريت في منهم فايده
٢٣ س أعجبني رد
٨
اخي وصديقي محمد الله يعطيك الصحه والعافيه المهندس
«لن يُفْلِح قوم ولَّوْا أَمْرَهُم امرَأة».
[صحيح] - [رواه البخاري
كلام رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم مش كلامي

Field Stories

As part of efforts to enhance women's political empowerment, the Karak Castle Center for Consultations and Training organized a workshop to evaluate the experiences of female candidates in the 2024 elections. Held over two days, September 29 and 30, 2024, the workshop included 19 participants, comprising six women who ran for elections and 13 who were unable to participate. The workshop aimed to highlight the challenges faced by women during the 2024 parliamentary elections, with a focus on electoral violence and its social and political impacts on women's participation in public life. Additionally, it sought to raise awareness about the importance of creating a fair and supportive electoral environment for women.

The workshop featured in-depth discussions about the electoral process and the impact of electoral violence on women's ability to participate actively. Participants included Engineer Maha Ali, Secretary-General of the National Committee for Women's Affairs, and political advisor Karen Bongard from the Canadian Embassy in Jordan. They discussed the experiences of participants who were unable to run or secure parliamentary seats in the last elections.

Key Themes and Outcomes from the Workshop

1 Social, Cultural, and Family Pressures

Women in Jordanian society face deep-rooted cultural and societal challenges, particularly regarding political participation. The experiences shared during the workshop highlighted the social pressures that force women to confront internal and external conflicts when deciding to engage in political or media work. Overcoming these challenges requires significant personal strength and determination.

Tribal customs and traditions emerged as significant barriers to women's parliamentary representation. One participant, a former municipal council member, had to withdraw from the electoral race due to pressure from her family and tribe, which feared the competition would cause «strife» among families and embarrass the tribe. Another participant from Ma'an noted that her tribe still resists the idea of women being part of decision-making, viewing politics as an unsuitable space for women. Many women reported struggles in balancing their political ambitions with family and tribal obligations, leading some to withdraw to maintain their social standing and family relationships.

2

Financial Challenges and the Prevalence of Political Money

Financial constraints were a major obstacle to women's political participation. Political money and vote-buying dominate the electoral landscape in Jordan. A municipal council veteran shared how she withdrew from the elections due to the significant financial burdens, as she could not secure the funding needed for her campaign. She described the electoral process as lacking integrity due to the widespread use of political money. Her experience underscored the urgent need for laws that criminalize political money and provide economic support for women to run for office without facing financial coercion.

A participant from Mafraq who wanted to run independently was directed by her tribe to join their list as a "quota representative." To secure a high position on the list, she was asked to pay 150,000 Jordanian dinars. Unable to afford this, she chose to withdraw. Her experience reflects the financial hurdles women face in an environment that demands significant financial backing, which most female candidates lack, leaving them vulnerable to exclusion.

Another participant, a popular figure in Madaba, spoke about how political money influenced the electoral process. She noted that tribal and party alliances often relied on large financial contributions to secure seats on lists. Feeling unable to compete under such conditions, she decided not to run. Her case highlights the importance of establishing clear and fair standards for list formation to ensure equitable competition.

Organizational and Political Challenges, and Weak Party Support

Organizational and political challenges also hindered female candidates. Many participants complained about the lack of clarity between party and local lists and the inadequate support from political parties. For instance, a candidate from Amman faced difficulties in explaining the differences between local and party lists to voters, which affected her campaign. Another candidate from Mafraq withdrew from her party's list 20 days before the elections, citing conspiracies within the party and a lack of genuine commitment to supporting women. She also highlighted the detrimental impact of widespread political money on the electoral process.

Several participants expressed frustration with the insufficient support from political parties. A member of a political party for 18 years noted that parties lack the mechanisms to support women politically and financially. She called for greater awareness campaigns and a stronger focus on women's roles in elections, emphasizing that female candidates face significant challenges due to weak party backing and the lack of clarity in the electoral system.

4 Bullying, Harassment, and Psychological Challenges

The challenges faced by female candidates were not limited to financial and organizational issues but extended to bullying and harassment, which affected their mental health. A candidate from Balqa, the first woman to receive the highest votes in her region, faced bullying from other candidates and pressure from her tribe to withdraw to avoid dividing tribal votes. Another candidate from Amman, despite receiving support from friends and neighbors, lacked strong party backing and had to rely on her own resources, which affected her confidence in the party system and its commitment to supporting women.

5 Lack of Electoral Awareness and the Need for Effective Campaigns

Participants emphasized the importance of raising public awareness about the role of women in political life and the need to support them. A former municipal council member from Irbid stressed the need to educate the public about electoral lists, particularly party lists, as many voters are still unaware of their significance. She noted that poor awareness of electoral mechanisms led to many invalid votes due to misunderstandings about the lists. She suggested that educating voters on the importance of party lists could reduce tribal conflicts and promote fair competition.

A participant from Madaba highlighted the need to empower women by raising awareness about elections and their political roles. She noted that many women remain influenced by traditions and fear societal reactions, preventing them from supporting female candidates or considering candidacy themselves, reflecting broader cultural norms.

6 Withdrawal Due to Political Money and Tribal Competition

Many participants pointed out that an electoral environment dominated by tribal competition and political money discouraged them from running. For example, a candidate from Karak chose not to run, fearing the impact of tribal rivalries on her reputation and popularity in charitable work. Another candidate from Madaba noted that tribal bias and high campaign costs made it difficult for her to participate in an environment focused on tribal affiliation and financial capacity.

These women believe that financial and tribal challenges continue to play a significant role in limiting women's chances of running and winning elections. Voters tend to support candidates from their own tribe, reinforcing male dominance in parliamentary seats.

The Importance of Supporting and Empowering Women Politically in Jordan

This workshop highlighted the challenges women face in Jordanian elections. Women continue to encounter numerous obstacles that hinder their political participation, from social and tribal pressures to financial challenges and societal bullying. While some women have managed to overcome these barriers, factors like political money and weak party support remain significant hurdles to women's political success.

Addressing these challenges requires effective measures by government institutions, civil society, and political parties. These measures include raising public awareness about women's political roles, developing legislation to protect female candidates and combat political money, and providing genuine material and moral support for women. Political parties must go beyond rhetoric and implement mechanisms to facilitate women's candidacy in a fair and safe electoral environment.

The workshop participants offered key recommendations, including enacting laws to criminalize the use of political money, providing partial funding for female candidates, and increasing awareness campaigns about women's roles in politics. Additionally, they emphasized the need to strengthen women's representation in parties and electoral lists. If implemented, these recommendations could improve the electoral environment and enhance women's participation in Jordan's political arena, contributing to a more equitable and inclusive society.

Recommendations

In light of the challenges faced by female candidates during the 2024 parliamentary elections and based on findings from interviews, field observations, and analysis, the Karak Castle Center for Consultations and Training proposes the following recommendations to foster a fair and inclusive electoral environment while effectively enhancing women's political participation. These recommendations address key areas of concern, including electoral violence, social and economic discrimination, and the broader systemic barriers that hinder women's political involvement.

1. Enhancing Public Awareness of Women's Political Participation

- **Nationwide Campaigns:** Launch public awareness campaigns to challenge societal stereotypes about women's roles in politics, emphasizing their importance in decision-making and national development. Target urban and rural communities alike to maximize impact.

- **Incorporation into Education:** Integrate gender equality and the significance of women's political participation into educational curricula, fostering a culture of acceptance and support among future generations.

2. Combating Illicit Financial Practices

- **Legislation:** Enact stringent laws to criminalize the use of black money and vote-buying in elections. Penalties should include disqualification of candidates and significant fines for violators.

- **Monitoring and Enforcement:** Strengthen the Independent Election Commission's (IEC) capacity to detect and address financial violations during campaign periods.

- **Financial Support:** Establish partial public funding programs for female candidates to alleviate the economic burdens associated with campaigning.

3. Reassessing the Definition of Electoral Violence

- **Expanded Scope:** Review and expand the IEC's current definition of electoral violence against women to include a wider range of actions, such as digital abuse, psychological threats, and social discrimination.

- **Awareness and Training:** Educate stakeholders, including election monitors and law enforcement, on the expanded definition to ensure comprehensive understanding and enforcement.

4. Strengthening Political Party Support

- **Gender-Balanced Lists:** Mandate political parties to adopt gender-balanced systems for forming electoral lists.
- **Training Programs:** Provide political parties with resources and training to manage inclusive campaigns, emphasizing the importance of gender equality.
- **Internal Advocacy:** Encourage parties to create platforms for addressing the challenges faced by women and ensure tangible support for female candidates.

5. Protection Mechanisms for Female Candidates

- **Legal Frameworks:** Develop comprehensive laws to protect female candidates from verbal abuse, cyberbullying, physical threats, and other forms of violence.
- **Dedicated Units:** Establish IEC units to handle complaints from female candidates and provide legal and psychological support.
- **Confidential Reporting Systems:** Create secure hotlines and platforms for reporting incidents of electoral violence and harassment.

6. Legislation Against Discrimination

- **Anti-Discrimination Laws:** Enact laws to address tribal, regional, and gender-based discrimination during electoral campaigns.
- **Cybercrime Policies:** Strengthen regulations to combat online harassment and misinformation targeting female candidates, including penalties for those spreading defamatory content.

7. Financial and Advisory Support

- **Funding Mechanisms:** Create programs to fund female candidates facing financial constraints, ensuring equitable participation in elections.
- **Consulting Services:** Provide legal, administrative, and financial consulting to female candidates, guiding them in resource management and campaign strategies.
- **NGO Networks:** Foster partnerships with NGOs to offer psychological and legal support to women navigating electoral challenges.

8. Simplifying Electoral List Registration

- **Inclusive Registration Processes:** Simplify electoral list registration procedures, ensuring accessibility for women of all backgrounds, including those with disabilities.

- **Monitoring Mechanisms:** Enhance oversight of the registration process to prevent discrimination and reduce tribal interference in list formation.

9. Awareness Programs to Combat Electoral Violence

- **Ongoing Campaigns:** Implement awareness programs that educate voters about the harmful effects of electoral violence, encouraging respectful treatment of female candidates.

- **Community Outreach:** Design programs tailored for male and female voters, explaining the importance of gender equality in politics and raising awareness of the regulations protecting women.

10.Media Advocacy and Support

- **Balanced Coverage:** Promote equitable media representation of female candidates, focusing on their qualifications and platforms rather than their appearance or personal lives.

- **Countering Misinformation:** Strengthen regulations to combat fake news and disinformation campaigns targeting female candidates.

- **Role of Digital Media:** Leverage social media and online platforms to highlight the successes and contributions of women in politics, fostering a positive narrative.

11.Enhancing Women's Representation in Parliament

- **Increased Quotas:** Advocate for a 30% minimum quota for female representation in parliament and local councils to ensure balanced participation.

- **Electoral Law Reforms:** Amend legislation to mandate female representation in party and electoral lists, increasing opportunities for women to attain political office.

12.Leveraging Technology

- **Monitoring Tools:** Utilize advanced digital tools to monitor electoral violence online and analyze campaign data.

- **International Best Practices:** Draw from successful regional and global initiatives to combat electoral violence and promote women's political engagement.

Implementing these recommendations will create a safer, more inclusive electoral environment for women, allowing them to exercise their political rights and contribute effectively to decision-making processes. Achieving these goals requires collaboration among government institutions, civil society, political parties, and the media, ensuring sustainable progress in Jordan's political landscape.

Field Photos

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